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tesy that we did a white person, and the Indians responded. In due time some of the Indians wanted credit until Grass Money payment time. The government paid fifty dollars twice a year to each man, woman, and child. This represented interest on tribal funds the government was holding in trust.

Carrying the Indians' accounts until Grass Money time brought on an unlooked-for complication. We had naturally supposed that when they received their pay, the Indians would return to their allotments. But the campout on the reservation of hundreds of families was too much like the old tribal life for them to return readily to their lonesome allotment camp.

They could feast, visit, gamble, and hold horse races, and those that drank were supplied by the whiskey peddlers. Then too there were many visitors from other tribes, as they knew food, beef, and whiskey would be plentiful.

To get our money we had to go to the reservation and collect while they still had it. They were pleased to see us, and they paid readily. They wanted to keep their credit good, but putting aside the necessary amount so as to pay up on their return was too much planning for them. That was especially true of the drinkers.

My first collection trip was successful and uneventful, and from then on it was my regular chore, and an interesting one. I would be gone from one to two days if the payment was held near the town of Cache, and longer when it was held near Ft. Sill at what was called "The Stone Store."

When death struck our little community, we were poorly prepared. Two women and one baby died in a single night. All the needs for a funeral were lacking—no undertaker, no caskets, no cemetery, and no preacher.

Early the next morning caskets were put together from yellow pine and brought to our store and set on sawhorses. There the townswomen covered, padded, and lined them. Black calico was used for the covering of the adult caskets, and white muslin for the baby's. Quilting cotton was used for the padding and pillow, and bleached muslin for the lining.

Handles intended for toolboxes were screwed on the sides of the adult caskets by Dad after the women had tacked the black calico in place. Permission to bury the bodies on the claim adjoining the town on the north was granted by an old German homesteader.

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452 When their money ran out before payment time, we would credit those who were not heavy drinkers until the next Grass Money time. Though all merchandise was charged to the husband, the wives bought in the same way. We followed the custom of keeping the sales slip for each wife's purchases with her name, but we were never called upon to show who bought what. I wondered whether the wives had an after-payment settlement.

432 The women always had a lot of fun buying dry goods. We kept yardsticks laid out along the dry-goods counter so that a woman could point to the particular bolt she was interested in. Each bought for herself and her children; but as each made her choices, the other wife or wives stood by the counter and passed remarks freely about her selections. These remarks always caused much merriment, not only within the group itself but also from other Indian women listening in.

177 One white custom at which the Comanche women never ceased
829 to wonder was the freedom with which white women would converse with men other than those of their own families. A homesteader's wife who had not talked to anyone but her husband for two weeks would come in plumb full of talk. As she was doing her buying, she would tell me all about the crops, the new calves or colts, and where she and her husband would be driving to church or a picnic the next day. In turn she would want to know all about what happened in town, who had had a baby, who had died, and all the gossip. Meanwhile Indian women who had, I knew, been to Carlisle or Chilocco would be listening very intently and talking in low tones to other women sitting near, apparently describing the conversation.

562 Comanche men and boys could scarcely help being vain, with all the attention the women and girls of the family bestowed upon them. This was especially apparent when the family as a whole was going to
292 a gathering of any kind, white or Indian. The women would have the finest of shirts and neck scarves prepared for the husband and the boys to wear for the occasion. Often the shirt and bandana would
302 be made from the finest red or pink silk. Nearly all the men wore
301 their hair long, and the husband would sport a new hairdo with strips of otter skin or fancy yarn braided in with the hair to increase the
292 size of the braid. The white sheet that was rolled up and worn around the waist like a sash had been washed and sun-bleached until it was of a dazzling whiteness.

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123 609 562 must stay completely apart from the Comanche women and girls." He explained it this way. Comanche women are supposed to have no communications, other than the most necessary, with menfolks other than their own, and this applied with extra force to white men. Comanche men held their women to strict account as to their conduct, and a white man could cause a Comanche woman serious trouble, unawares, should he try to be friendly. I lived up to this rule in every respect. Then, in addition, I naturally extended to all Indian women and girls every courtesy I had been taught to extend to women of my own race. This, too, could have had some bearing.

887 I could not help but notice Mo-cho-rook. He was a standout in every way. To start with, he was obviously the oldest of the old Indians. He was noticeably smaller than any of the other Indian men. And what was even more obvious, he had at this time only one wife. And of all the old fellows, he had by far the youngest wife and the youngest child. He was completely antisocial. I not only never gleaned 157 [123] a smile, but I never even drew a grunt from him, in the five plus years that I knew him.

On the top of all this, he had about the meanest look, and the cruelest eyes, I have ever seen on a human. I was later to know Geronimo, who was being held as a prisoner of war at Fort Sill. If anyone could have run Mo-cho-rook even a close second for looking mean and cruel, it would have been Geronimo.

The only time he ever came inside the store was when he needed smoking tobacco. He would have his nickel ready in his hand, would point to the Bull Durham, and when I handed him the tobacco, he would hand me the nickel. My fattest smile never brought a change in his expression. Once he had his tobacco, he would return outside. I never knew him to stay in out of even the most inclement weather.

142 854 I soon sorted out his wife. She was a young, large-limbed girl, with the true Comanche copper color. She had a baby boy, around a year old. He was old enough to be out of the cradle board, but that first summer he was not walking as yet. He was a healthy-looking little 575 chap and, like all Indian babies, well behaved. I was later to learn that this child was the only one ever born to Mo-cho-rook by any of the numerous wives he had had. His squaw nearly always stayed in our store until they were ready to go home, and she bought all their 452 supplies. He was one of the few Indians who never found it necessary to run an account until Grass Money time.

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231 for at least five years. His brother must have put his brand on many horses. One thing I must not forget. We had figured my horse's age, by his teeth, as possibly eight or nine years old—though after seven their teeth are not too accurate a gauge.

797 Some five or six miles east of the town of Cache, Blue Beaver Creek
[133] liberates itself from the mountains and, flowing south, crosses the
[368] boundary between the Wild Life Refuge and the homestead-allotment area. Just there is located the Deyo Mission.

It took its name from its founder, the Reverend E. C. Deyo, a minister affiliated with the Northern Baptist Convention. A number of my old friends were charter members of the Native Baptist Church he organized there. The Reverend Deyo was a smallish man, about five feet six or seven inches tall. He wore an auburn Prince Albert beard that was always carefully trimmed. Rich colored, it was without a single gray hair.

He was one of the two missionaries I knew who learned the Comanche tongue and could converse and preach to the Comanches in their own language. He was in our store a number of times, directly after the country opened, when there would be an Indian gathering in our vicinity.

I never learned what, if any, religious influence Wer-que-yah may have experienced before the advent of Preacher Deyo, but it was quite evident that the little missionary and his church were influencing his later life.

452 A big event for me was making my first Grass Money payment on my own initiative, in the absence of my parents. I rode directly to the town of Cache before going to the reservation. I collected from an Indian or two I found in town, and learned from them where some of our other customers were camped.

361 There must have been two hundred or more Indian families in in-
413 dividual camps, scattered over possibly three hundred acres. The en-
[366] trance to the camp-out was on the north, and a short way inside the gate sat the Red Store, the place of business of the licensed trader.
[657] He was a merchant licensed by the Indian Department. He operated
452 on Indian ground and was permitted to do a credit business with the Indians, and he sat at the Army quartermaster's table when the payments were made. If the Indian being paid owed an account, the trader got his money first.

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Wer-que-yah's camp sat a ways to the west of the trading post, in a small grove of blackjack trees. When I rode up, he was apparently pleased to see me. I was to learn that this was the general attitude of all our Indian customers—glad we were collecting so their credit would be good until another payment. Putting away what they owed until they came home and paid us was too great a problem for them to cope with. Should they remain camped there till the rest of their money was gone, they would spend the money they were saving for our account.

Before leaving the store that morning, I took a small memo book and copied the amount each Indian owed as shown by the ledger. I believe there were only fifteen accounts in this first payment. After we shook hands, I got out my little book and started to tell Wer-que-yah how much he owed.

Then his manner changed. He seemed bothered and was no longer smiling. He began telling me to wait, "his house," for *tiwa* (white man), "then I pay." On foot, he hurried toward the south, across a bit of a swag in the prairie. I could see him all the way till he entered a tent. He came out quickly. With him was the little Baptist missionary —well-trimmed Prince Albert whiskers and all.

Whenever I had met him, the missionary had had a calm, friendly, but dignified manner. But I realized as they approached now that both he and the Indian were of solemn mien. Reverend Deyo carried a small tablet and a pencil. Almost once, he asked, "How much do you claim this man owes you?"

I took out my little memorandum book again and showed him the amount opposite Wer-que-yah's name—I believe it was slightly over $59.00—and he wrote it down at the top of his tablet. "I asked this Indian to keep his duplicate sales slips," he told me. "I want to see how their total compares."

I was busy thinking, while my customer went over to his hack and secured a woman's old purse that had long since lost both its shape and its looks. I was wondering what sort of a box the preacher and the Indian were trying to put me in. Supposing he hadn't kept all of the slips? Suppose he was honest, but had lost some? Maybe we hadn't always given him a duplicate!

The slips were rolled up endwise and tied with a strip of bed ticking. We untied them and straightened them out, and I started reading the total of each. The minister wrote them down in a column.

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452 797 Soon I came to a slip with a mistake of a dollar in the Indian's favor. It was my mother's writing. The Indian had brought back a pair of girl's shoes, taken another pair that cost more, and also bought supplies —groceries and dry goods. I called the preacher's attention to the mistake, and he agreed. "Yes, it should be a dollar more." And he wrote it down that way. When he totaled the entries, the amount was exactly a dollar more than the amount I had given him.

During the auditing of the slips, both the minister and the Indian had remained grave and distant. The atmosphere wasn't friendly. Maybe they were embarrassed. I was. I was only in my fifteenth year, though I was operating in an adult sphere. My head was only a fifteen year-old head, and the same went for my experience. It was the first time anyone had seen fit to check our bookkeeping. In a way, I was feeling accused.

But when the preacher explained to Wer-que-yah, in the Comanche tongue, that our bookkeeping was honest, there was a bit of a lilt to the missionary's voice. And now the Indian was all smiles. As we arose from the ground, he exclaimed, "Wano! Wano!" a number of times and patted my back vigorously.

Then it was Reverend Deyo's turn. He extended his hand, saying, "I want to thank you for dealing with *my people* honestly. I checked your prices. I already knew you sell to the Indian and the white man at the same price. I shall tell *my people* you deal honestly. Not all merchants treat uneducated Indians fairly."

439 452 [672] This incident may have accounted for some of our success as independent Indian traders. We, in turn, had to depend entirely upon the honesty of the Indian. He could neither be sued, nor could a judgment be levied against him.

000 Several years ago, two of my nephews were living with me and attending the university. One popular song you heard each time you tuned in on a radio program was "Don't Take Your Guns to Town, Son!" It was a plea of a mother to her son, just approaching young manhood, not to go to town armed, lest some gunman might see an easy way to get another notch on his gun and kill her offspring.

609 452 I told the boys I had once received much the same advice from an old Indian from whom I tried to borrow a gun while I was badly scared. It was Wer-que-yah. It happened during another Grass Money payment at the same Cache reservation. This time Wer-que-yah's

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camp was southeast of the Red Store, on a dry run that had a good deal of timber along both sides of its gouge.

Nearly every payment, we collectors would hear of someone being caught collecting on the reservation by a couple of deputy U.S. marshals, who had taken his money and pistol-whipped him. Until this payment, I had never been approached by a marshal. While they carried commissions, presumably they were on the trader's payroll.

I don't think I had ever been noticed before. I went to the camps of our customers only. Sometimes it would take two or three trips over a couple of days to catch everyone. When through, I hit for home. Often I was carrying considerable money and I didn't feel like visiting.

On this occasion, I was about to miss the Per-da-sop-py camp, and one of the girls—the children had all been to school—called me. I rode to the tent entrance, dismounted, and, holding my horse, waited till she brought out what she owed. As she was paying, a single marshal riding by saw the transaction and ordered me off the campgrounds.

We were about a half-mile from the gate, and he rode on ahead. I felt sure he was looking for his partner. I had visions of losing the $300 to $400 of the store's money I was carrying, and being pistol-whipped besides. I had seen men pistol-whipped by officers, and I didn't relish the prospect.

I had already collected from Wer-que-yah, knew his camp was hidden by trees, and rode directly to him. Excited, I told him my story and what I feared was going to happen to me. I knew either he or his son, Enoch, owned a good Colt .44. I asked to borrow it.

He began shaking his head. "Gun no wano! Gun heap bad!" he exclaimed over and over. "Horse heap fast!"

He jumped up, motioned for me to follow him, and started on foot down the bank of the run. Finding a place where the bank was low, he crossed over and continued down the east side. In a hundred or so yards we came to where the run left the reservation, near where it emptied into West Cache Creek.

Someone had pulled the staples holding the wire from a couple of posts, and the wire sagged almost to the ground. My friend stood on the wire and I rode across. I thanked him and hurried on my way. I wasn't by any means over my scare. I rode in the Cache Creek timber as far as I could and put my horse to a long lope—ready to start him running at the first sign of pursuit.

During the summer, a man by the name of Smith had started a

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little territorial bank in Cache. His building, which was about sixteen by twenty feet, was divided about half and half by a counter, with a sort of iron wickerwork, or grill, extending above the counter. I couldn't see anyone chasing me, but for all I knew the marshals could have beaten me to town.

I never slacked speed till I reached the bank door. I had never been inside before, but I hit running. Through the door, I began clawing money out of my pockets with both hands and shoving it through the wicker. I didn't know but what the marshals might follow me inside the bank. I told the banker who I was, the reason for my haste, and that I wanted to deposit the money. He had heard something of the ways of the guards at the reservation, and he congratulated me on my escape.

Looking back, remembering the humor I was in, how badly I was scared, I feel that had this wise Indian let me have his revolver, I would have stuck it in the waistband of my pants and, cocky as a rooster, tried to ride out the reservation gate. I knew I had broken no law.

If my guess was right, and if this guard and his partner were waiting for me, I was scared enough to try to use the gun. Someone would have been shot, and it probably would have been me. The marshals were experienced officers. Always their excuse was that they had seen the collector gambling with the Indians or selling whiskey.

These subsidized marshals always operated on Indian land, it seemed; and the only recourse was in United States Court—an expensive and long-drawn-out procedure. The collector was never arrested—just relieved of his money, whipped, and ordered off the reservation. We collectors wondered why we never heard of a whiskey peddler being pistol-whipped and having his stock and money taken from him.

Whiskey peddlers never showed till dark, and I'm sure the way out I was shown was the ingress and egress of more than one bootlegger. Already, there was a worn path.

We were quite aware that a guard was necessary on the reservation while the payment was in progress and for as long as any considerable number of Indians remained camped there. Otherwise, bootleggers and gamblers would have overrun the place. Every sizable post oak tree would have had a blackjack dealer's blanket spread under it.

But there were laws governing these practices. Collecting legitimate debts was a different proposition. This restriction was an idea of the licensed trader. It would have taken the army to have stopped

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many of the Indians from gambling when they had money. But as long as blackjack and three-card monte were dealt by Indians, the money remained in the tribe.

The camp-out on the reservation was dear to the older Indians' hearts. It was a reminder of the wild tribal days after the late summer buffalo hunt—the feasting, visiting, storytelling, gambling, and horse racing. There was no buffalo meat; but they had learned to eat beef, and there was plenty of money to buy it. Likewise, they could indulge in other goodies they had acquired a taste for—and the whiskey peddler came with the darkness each evening.

Mostly the visitors came from faraway tribes—people who didn't have Grass Money payments. They seemed to be old fellows, warrior age. Here, there, and yonder, you would see two old fellows squatted or sitting with their backs against blackjack trees, facing each other and visiting in the sign language. You were sure they were reriding the old war trails.

There was another string to the licensed trader's fiddle. Once an Indian failed to pay his bill to an independent trader, his credit with that merchant was gone. When out of money, he had to trade with the licensed trader. These traders' prices ran a great deal higher, and most Indians wanted to keep out of their clutches.

I got over my scare once the store's money was safe in the bank, and I rode back to the reservation. My memory is that I had seen about all of the Indians owing large accounts, and I had only the odds and ends to clean up. I never saw the marshal again that afternoon. I rode in home, eighteen miles, that night, starting after dark. Perhaps I should add that most adults with sense, large merchants from Lawton and surrounding towns, and the moneylenders set up camp in the section line outside the reservation gate. There they could catch the Indians going and coming.

Some readers may read a different meaning into the word *reservation* than I have in mind in this story. I use it here in the sense of land held back, reserved from allotment and homesteading, when the area was opened for settlement in 1901. There were three of these tracts, containing two or three sections each. One was at Fort Sill, one at Anadarko, and one just southwest of Cache. There was a licensed trading store on each tract, and the land was the property of the Indians. Reservation was the name in general use for these areas. The